



University of Wales
Student Handbook
For Online Students

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University of Wales
Prifysgol Cymru

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by the Course team of Arden University.

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Arden University wishes to emphasise that, while every effort is made to ensure accuracy, the material in this Handbook is subject to alteration or amendment in the light of changes in regulations or in policy or of financial or other necessity.

Foreword

It is a pleasure to welcome you to Arden University and wish you well in your studies.

Arden University is at the forefront of distance learning provision, not only in the UK but also all over the World. It intends to maintain this position as a leader in supported open learning. This means combining appropriate communication technologies and knowledge media with personal tuition and counselling to ensure that you can learn effectively and enjoyably. In particular, Arden University is making investment into new administrative mechanisms to ensure first class customer services are in place to provide you excellent support.

Arden University takes its obligations to each of its students very seriously. You have registered for an online distance learning course with particular personal goals in mind, and all the staff want to help you achieve those goals successfully.

The purpose of this Handbook is to describe the procedures and policies that are an essential element in sustaining an effective relationship between Arden University and its students. These policies make explicit the expectations on both sides. I advise you to familiarise yourself with the contents pages and to read any sections that are of interest to you. The Handbook should then be kept for more detailed consultation as particular issues arise. Most of the questions you have about Arden University practices will be answered in these pages.

I trust that you will find your association with Arden University a stimulating and rewarding experience.

Dr Philip Hallam
CEO
Arden University

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Welcome from Arden University

Welcome to the course; you have joined one of four intakes: January, April, July or October. Our aim is to provide you with the opportunity to establish a firm foundation for a successful career in your chosen discipline.

You will be studying alongside students from a variety of backgrounds. Though you are expected to invest time and effort into your studies you should also take every opportunity to have fun and enjoyment. We hope that you will find your learning experience to be productive, enjoyable and successful.

Purpose of this Handbook

The purpose of this Handbook is to introduce students to online distance learning study through Arden University, and to lay down the standards that Arden University requires from students and set out the criteria by which we operate.

Key themes are outlined and initial guidance is given regarding various key personal skills (such as effective reading and writing), which underpin effective study and also contribute directly to good working practice.

1 General Information

1.1 *Introduction to Arden University*

Arden University has been working with various Universities and Professional Bodies, providing distance-learning courses to high-achieving students for over 20 years. We are dedicated to providing you with a high standard of Tutor and administrative support throughout your studies and always listen to the comments of our students in order to ensure the learning process is a satisfying and rewarding experience for all involved.

1.2 *Relationship with the University of Wales*

The University of Wales is the Awarding Body that has validated and approved the course on which you have enrolled. As such, Arden University is responsible for making sure that the quality of provision meets their prescribed levels and standards.

To enable quality to be monitored, the University of Wales appoint External Examiners to approve assessment procedures and results, as well as seeking feedback from students on the course.

The delivery of your distance learning programme is governed by the University of Wales regulations, codes of practice and procedures which can be found in the Taught Degrees Handbook which is available to download from the University's website at the following link: <http://www.wales.ac.uk/Resources/Documents/Partners/Validated/Regulations-Procedures-Protocols/Taught-Degrees-Handbook-201516.pdf>

2. Useful Contacts

Student Support Team	Tel: +44 (0) 24 76 515700 e-mail: walessupport@arden.ac.uk
Examination Co-ordinator	Tel: +44 (0) 24 76 515700 e-mail: exams@arden.ac.uk
Progression Team	Tel: +44 (0) 24 76 515700 e-mail: studyprogress@arden.ac.uk
Head of Student Support Caroline Stonell	Tel: +44 (0) 24 76 515700 email: cstonell@arden.ac.uk
Programme Leaders MBA – Matthew Cooper LLB– Angela Burns	Email: mcooper@arden.ac.uk Email: aburns@arden.ac.uk
Academic Director John Vaughan	Tel: +44 (0) 24 76 515700 email: jvaughan@arden.ac.uk
Arden University Chief Executive Dr Philip Hallam	Tel: +44 (0) 24 76 515700 email: phallam@arden.ac.uk

2.1 Key Support Roles

Student Support Team

The Arden University Student Support Team is here to support you throughout your studies and will make regular contact with you to ensure you are progressing well with your studies.

Your Student Support Team will be able to help you with any pastoral and administrative query relating to your studies.

Tutors

Each module you study has a dedicated module tutor. All tutors appointed are senior academics and subject specialists approved by the University of Wales. They will help you by facilitating your academic progress and to this end they will set tasks and activities in the appropriate discussion areas of ilearn, Arden University virtual learning environment.

The primary means of support will be delivered on-line through ilearn. Where appropriate, tutors may also provide support by other means, e.g. by email.

The tutoring process is viewed as an essential aspect of development and support for students. It is informally based and designed to encourage two-way communication, either peer-to-peer or student-to-tutor.

Your module Tutors will provide you with academic advice and guidance and answer your questions of an academic nature. For all other queries you are encouraged to contact your Student Support Team at Arden University directly for support at walessupport@arden.ac.uk.

Progression Team

The role of the Arden University Progression Team is to ensure you are progressing well in your studies.

At the start of the intake your Progression Advisor will support you with working through the Induction Module. They will also assist you with completing a study schedule and will identify any additional support that may be required to help you progress through your studies.

Head of Student Support

The Head of Student Support is responsible for overseeing the work of the Student Support Team and the Progression Team.

Programme Leader

The Programme Leader has overall responsibility for the structure and delivery of the course.

3. Learning Support

3.1 Induction

Before you commence study on the course you are required to undertake an Induction Module which contains all the information you need to get you started on your study and an interactive quiz to consolidate your understanding of the processes and procedures you will encounter during your studies. The aims of the Induction are for you to:

- Get to know staff and fellow students
- Gain a comprehensive understanding of various aspects of your course of study.
- Access a range of resources to support your study
- Ask questions relating to any aspect of the learning experience.
- Become acquainted with the University of Wales and Arden University procedures and policies.

At the start of your intake, you will receive your username and password for ilearn, Arden University Virtual Learning Environment. You will access your Induction module by logging onto ilearn.

If you join the Induction module before the formal intake start date, there will be a number of tasks already available for you to work through. You will be given access to your Interactive Quiz on the date of the intake. A reminder notice will be posted on ilearn on this date. It is important that you complete and pass the Quiz within the first two weeks of the intake; after these two weeks have elapsed, access to the Interactive Quiz will be revoked. If you have not passed the Quiz by this time, you will have to wait until the next intake to complete your Induction and progress onto your first module – this could be up to three months away!

Once you have successfully passed the Interactive Quiz, you can activate your first module on ilearn. If you experience difficulties during this process, please contact the Student Support Team.

3.2 Learning Materials

You will access your entire core learning material for the course via ilearn.

The module learning materials are designed to facilitate your learning and to allow you to achieve the learning outcomes for each module. The material is interactive and contains practical activities, which have been designed to enable you to apply theoretical principles and frameworks.

Try to use your own background when completing the activities and draw the best ideas and solutions you can from your own experience. To get the best out of your learning experience, you are encouraged to discuss your ideas with other students or your colleagues; this will make learning much more stimulating. Remember, if in doubt, or if you have any questions about the modules or how to study, ask your Tutor.

If you wish to purchase your own textbooks, suggested reading is included within each module descriptor.

A range of online library resources is made available to Arden University students, which supplements the learning materials within ilearn. Resources may be provided by the University's online library.

Arden University's resources include libraries of electronic books (e-books). Arden University aims to provide a copy of the core text for each module, although students should be aware that the availability of books in electronic form is subject to publishers' permissions. In the event that a core text book cannot be provided in e-book format, suitable alternatives may be available. There are occasions when students may wish to purchase the hard copy of a core text book, in the event that it is not available in the Arden University library.

3.3 *ilearn*

ilearn is an online facility designed to enhance your learning experience and help you through your studies. It provides access to:

Your module learning materials	Assignment Area
Discussion forums	Online electronic resources
News forums	Course Information
Group Learning Space	E-mail/Messaging facility
My Learning Space	Links to Rules and Regulations

You will find a detailed explanation of the key functions of ilearn and how to use them during your Induction. The site will be updated regularly with new and relevant information as it becomes available. Tutors may make announcements or add notes to relevant sections or engage with you in discussion forums.

There is also a page for your own personal profile and photos. You are encouraged to add information about yourself, as other students may find it interesting.

ilearn will be our principal way of communicating with students registered on this course so it is essential that you visit ilearn on a regular basis.

3.4 *How will students support each other through the course?*

We believe success on the course will be enhanced through the development of a supportive learning community. We will achieve this through facilitated online discussions on ilearn where you will have the opportunity to undertake group tasks with other students.

3.5 *How to access ilearn*

You can access ilearn from Arden University's homepage www.rdi.co.uk

1. Click on the Student Login link and select ilearn
2. Enter your username and password and click 'Login'.
3. Select the relevant Module from the "My Modules" menu on the right hand side.

Alternatively you can access the ilearn site directly by entering the following web address in your web browser: www.ilearn.rdi.co.uk

3.6 *Module Release*

Access to modules will be given on the start date of each new study period as long as any prerequisites for those modules have been satisfied. You will be required to release your module on ilearn to begin studying. You will have up to **four weeks** from the module start date in which to release your module.

Please remember if you miss this deadline you will have to wait to join the module at the next study period. Unfortunately no exceptions can be made to this rule.

4 Staff/Student Obligations

4.1 Learning Contract

By embarking on this course of study, you confirm your commitment to Arden University's **Learning Contract** (Annex 1).

This learning contract is a 'partnership' between you, the student, and Arden University as your learning provider to help you understand the roles and responsibilities of each party during the learning process.

As you read through the Learning Contract, you will note that there is a specific regulation about plagiarism. Arden University and the University of Wales take plagiarism very seriously and strict penalties apply when students cheat in written assessment or present someone else's material for assessment as if it were their own (this is called plagiarism). In order to avoid plagiarism it is imperative you reference your work appropriately. Please refer to Sections 8.5 of this Handbook and to the guidance on academic writing and referencing contained within the study skills section of the induction module.

Very few students commit such offences, but Arden University believes that it is important that all students understand why academic honesty is a matter of such concern and why such severe penalties are imposed.

4.2 What you can expect from your Tutor

The tutor will provide learning support and advice to learners in the following manner:

- Providing a welcome forum post at the start of the module
- Providing a response to your email, wherever possible within 2 working days (Monday – Friday).
- Initiating task and discussions via the module discussion forum on ilearn.
- Moderating discussion boards and inputting as required.
- Live online chat sessions, where appropriate.
- Monitoring student participation and progress.

4.3 Student Representation

Student representation is a mechanism that helps Arden University ensure that the student voice is fully represented in decision making. Representation provides opportunities for students to feed directly into not only Course related developments, but also the wider activities of Arden University. Becoming a Student Representative is not only a great opportunity to make a positive difference to your learning experience and that of your fellow students, but it is also great for your CV.

Find out how you can become a Student Representative in Sections 7.7 of this Handbook.

Find out more about Arden University's policy on Student Engagement in Section 7.6 of this Handbook.

4.4 Student Feedback and Questionnaires

As part of Arden University's quality enhancement processes, you will be asked to complete an online module evaluation questionnaire at the end of each module. A link to the online questionnaire can be found on each module page.

In addition, you may be contacted by the Student Representative via e-mail 1-2 weeks prior to Course Committee meetings to give you the opportunity to raise any concerns or to highlight any positive feedback you wish for the Committee to discuss.

Note: All information is dealt with in strictest confidence and wherever possible anonymity is maintained.

4.5 Annual Monitoring

At the conclusion of each year, academic departments are invited to reflect on the strengths/weaknesses of the previous year through the Annual Monitoring process. An important part of the process held between Arden University and the University's senior management is a consideration of the student feedback provided by the Courses Committee and the module evaluation questionnaire. Other reference sources considered include: External Examiners' reports, students' module results, students' registration, retention and completion statistics, and the action plan from the annual monitoring report of the previous year.

The views of students are considered extremely important to the successful running of your specific course and of our undergraduate courses as a whole. Your input is, therefore, very important and may significantly influence both the content of our courses and the processes by which they operate.

Arden University is committed to providing the highest quality of education possible within the limits imposed by the resources available, to ensure that you benefit from the academic, social and cultural experience. Where candidates feel that their legitimate expectations are not being met, whether it is an academic or non-academic matter, they have the right of access to the **Complaints Procedure** and **Academic Appeals Policy** contained in this Handbook (in Section 8) although it is hoped that most complaints can be settled at a local level.

5 Course Information

5.1 Module Descriptions

The learning outcomes, content, recommended reading and assessment details for each module are described in module specifications which can be found in the Course and Module Handbook.

The module specifications will identify any key text for the module. Where a key text or e-book is identified, you are expected to purchase your own copy so that you can engage in the student-managed learning associated with the key text.

5.2 Course Learning Outcomes

Arden University and the University of Wales use learning outcomes to define academic standards and the level of student achievement. Learning outcomes describe, at a threshold level, the knowledge, understanding, affective and transferable skills which you are expected to demonstrate on successful completion of a period of learning. Within the modular curriculum structure learning outcomes are expressed for both courses and their constituent modules. Your achievement of the learning outcomes of the individual modules collectively contributes to your achievement of the learning outcomes of the course for which you are registered.

The learning outcomes of your programme are set out in the course specification document which can be found in the Course and Module Handbook.

5.3 Maximum Course Registration Timeframe

Each course has an expected completion time which is shown in the table below. Additionally, the University of Wales Academic Regulations specify maximum and minimum periods of registration for each of their courses.

As an online distance learning student you have the flexibility to set your own pace of study within the minimum/maximum University of Wales registration periods shown below.

Award	Total Credit for Award	Expected Duration	Minimum Period of Registration	Maximum Period of Registration
Masters Degree	180	2.5 years	1 year	4 years
Honours Degree	360	6 years	3 years	10 years
Honours Degree Final Year top-up	120	2 years	1 year	3 years
Graduate Diploma	120	2 years	1 year	2 years
Certificate of Higher Education	120	2 years	1 year	2 years

Please note that the maximum period of registration will be shorter if you have been granted exemptions through University of Wales' accreditation of prior certificated learning.

Once you register and gain access to a module, you will have a maximum of **nine months** from the start date of the study period to study to complete the module.

It is expected that you submit assessment and pass the module during this timeframe. Normal regulations on 'intent to submit'; re-assessment, extensions and deferrals apply during the period.

If you have not achieved a pass for assessments submitted during the maximum registration timeframe, your access from the module will be withdrawn and you will be required to re-purchase the module in order to continue studying.

When you re-purchase a module, your assessment history (i.e. any previous referral on the module) will still apply. If you have undertaken the maximum permitted re-assessment opportunities on a module (details available in section 6.12 below) you will not be permitted to re-purchase the module.

In exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Student Affairs Committee you may apply and be granted 'leave of absence' during the maximum registration timeframe.

Periods of authorised 'leave of absence' will not count towards the maximum module registration timeframe. It should be noted that an authorised leave of absence will not allow you to exceed the maximum study period on the course.

If you would like to apply for a leave of absence, please contact the Progression Team studyprogress@arden.ac.uk.

5.5 Inactivity, Re-registration and Withdrawal

It is a requirement of the University of Wales that all of its students undertake an annual re-registration process. Each year, around the anniversary of your enrolment, you will notice that when you log into your ilearn account you will be asked to re-confirm your personal details.

Failure to complete the required re-enrolment process on ilearn will result in you not being able to access your ilearn study materials. It will also mean that you will not be registered as an active student and will therefore be unable to continue on your course.

Please note that if you have not passed the module within the maximum study period for that module, you will be required to re-enroll on the module and pay the appropriate module fee.

Students who do not take any assessment within any given nine month period may be withdrawn from the course due to inactivity.

6. Assessment

6.1 Assessment Methods

The assessment methods used for each module on your course are detailed in the Course and Module Handbook on ilearn.

6.2 Registering to take Assessments

This course is designed to be as flexible as possible, so you can study it in your own time, and ensure it fits into your life pattern.

There are four assessment points during each calendar year: January, April, July and October. You are normally required to undertake assessment in a module at one of these assessment opportunities.

You must register to take each assessment with Arden University. This must be done at least **six weeks** before the due date. Please refer to your course timetable on ilearn for details of assessment registration deadlines. **It is your responsibility to register to take each assessment yourself.** If you fail to do so, you will not be permitted to take the assessment and any work submitted will not be marked.

To register for an assessment, you must complete the Intent to Submit process by using electronic intent to submit link on Ilearn.

If your module assessment has multiple components, you may be required to register separately for each component and complete multiple ITS forms. Please refer to each module page for details.

At any single assessment point students would not normally be allowed to register for assessment in more than three modules up to a maximum of 60 credits, including any deferrals and referrals.

6.3 Release of Assignments

Once you have registered to take an assessment, a new assignment brief will be released to you normally around five weeks before the deadline for submission.

Please note that the assessment brief may change for each assessment period so make sure you check your module page on ilearn before starting work on your assessment. If you are retaking a referred assessment you will be required to complete the new assessment brief.

The assessment briefs will contain the following information:

1. Module title, Assignment title, submission date, word count
2. Submission instructions
3. Assignment brief/tasks detailing what the candidate needs to do.
4. Student Guidelines where applicable to assist you in your understanding of the exact requirements of the assessment.
5. Specific performance criteria mapped against the grading structure.

6.4 Registering to Take an Exam

If your course includes an examination you will be required to register to take the examination a minimum of 6 weeks prior to the date of the exam. To register for your exam you must complete the *Intent to Submit* form found on the relevant Ilearn page.

If you are taking an examination, please ensure you clearly mark details of the venue where you wish to take your examination.

Free of charge examination venues are available in Coventry, UK and at our Arden University premises in Hong Kong. Overseas students may take examinations at British Council Offices worldwide. Please note that charges will be set by the British Council and students will be responsible for paying charges for examinations directly to the venue.

6.5 Alternative Examination Venues

If it's not practical for you to take your exam at one of our free venues or at a British Council Office, our exams team will assist you with arranging your exam at an alternative venue.

Our Examinations Team maintain a list of approved worldwide examination centres. For details of approved centres in your region please email exams@arden.ac.uk. Our examination co-ordinators will be happy to assist you in arranging your examination.

Students will be responsible for paying charges directly to the venue. Charges are set by the venue and will therefore vary.

6.6 Approval of Alternative Examination Venues

If it is not practical to take examinations at an existing Arden University approved centre, you may put forward an alternative College or University examination centre to be considered for approval. It is strongly recommended that you do this well before you register to take your examination to ensure the approval process is complete before you make your examination arrangements.

An approval process will be undertaken by Arden University to ensure that the institution is of good standing, has the capability to host examinations and meets Arden University's approval criteria.

For more information about the process for approval of Arden University examination centres please contact exams@arden.ac.uk.

6.7 Deadlines and deferrals

Submission dates are shown on each assignment paper given to candidates and will be in line with the published assessment timetable. Please note that assessments change for every assessment period.

If you are unable to meet an assessment deadline after you have registered, you have the opportunity to cancel your assessment registration up to 48 hours before the submission date by informing a member of the Student Support Team.

If you have registered to take an examination, you may also cancel your registration up to 48 hours before the start time of the examination. Please note that for examination cancellations a charge may be payable to your exam venue.

If you fail to take an assessment or exam for which you have registered without cancelling your registration, you will automatically receive a mark of zero. Any referral opportunities will be capped at 40%, you will also be liable to complete a new assessment. It will not be appropriate for you to submit your original assessment. It is your responsibility to ensure that you submit the correct assessment for your chosen assessment period. Incorrect submissions will be awarded a mark of zero.

6.8 Word Count Policy for Assessments

Each assessment brief for written (text based) assignments will detail the word limits required.

Below are the rules relating to all text assignments, i.e. those for which words can be counted:

- Each Assessment Brief issued to students will include an indicative word count. The word count excludes the **title page, executive summary, reference list and appendices**. Where assessment questions have been reprinted from the assessment brief these will also be excluded from the word count. **ALL other printed words ARE included in the word count. Printed words include those contained within charts and tables.**
- Students should be aware that where they exceed the word count then this may result in a reduction in grade. Where the word count is exceeded the marker will take this into account in the grading of the work. This is an academic judgment and will be explained in the feedback to the student.
- When work is marked the word count is one of the factors taken into account along with content, analysis etc. Relatively minor excess word counts will be ignored. Work below the word count will not receive any additional penalty.
- Where the module has specific requirements, for example writing in a succinct way, which mean that exceeding the word count involves specific penalties, this will be clearly specified. Such variations will be rare.
- Students are required to indicate the exact word count, as defined above, on the Title Page of the assessment. The quotation of an incorrect word count will be treated as an attempt to deceive and will be considered as a disciplinary offence under the appropriate University regulations.
- Academic staff will not be able to indicate in advance, for example in reviewing a draft, the extent of any penalty.

6.9 Help with Referencing and Avoiding Plagiarism

You must ensure that you carefully read the information on plagiarism provided within the Induction module on ilearn and complete the Plagiarism Quiz before commencing your first module. You can return to this quiz later in your study to refresh your understanding of key definitions relating to unfair practice and referencing.

You must also ensure you have read and understood Arden University Unfair Practice Policy (Section 8.5 of this Handbook) which can be accessed via the following link:

<http://moodle.bl.arden.ac.uk/guides/Unfair Practice in Assessment policy.pdf>

Staff involved in the assessment process will use a range of techniques along with their academic judgement, knowledge and experience to assist them in the detection of unfair practice. One of the tools that Arden University utilises to help staff identify potential unfair practice is Turnitin. The Turnitin system allows your Tutor to check your work for improper citation, incorrect or inadequate referencing or potential plagiarism by comparing your work against its continuously updated databases. All assessments submitted for formal assessment will be scanned through the Turnitin software.

Before formal submission of your assignment to ilearn, you can upload your draft assignment to Turnitin via the submission portal. This will enable you to view the draft originality report generated to Turnitin and thus you will have the opportunity to make corrections to your assignment before making your final submissions. You can find instructions on how to do this in section 6.10 below. In addition a guide is available on ilearn to help you review your Turnitin originality report and identify any problem area. It is essential for you to read this information before you start planning for your first assessment.

Please remember that the Turnitin report is just one of the sources of evidence that will be considered when investigating suspected cases of unfair practice. It is important to understand that a Turnitin originality report showing a match to an external source may be used as evidence during the investigation of suspected cases of unfair practice. However, an originality report that shows a low or even a 0% match cannot and will not be accepted as evidence that no unfair practice has taken place.

6.10 Submitting your assignment

Assignments will normally be submitted electronically to the assessment submission area in ilearn. You can find instructions on how to submit your work in the Guide to Submitting an Assessment document on ilearn.

Please remember that all of your assignments are to be submitted in this way unless you have agreed an alternative submission method in advance with your Student Support Team. If you know of a reason why you will not be able to submit your assignment electronically via ilearn, please contact your Student Support Team immediately to arrange an alternative submission method.

By submitting your assignment you will be agreeing to the Student Declaration, which confirms that the work you have submitted is your own original work. You will also be agreeing for your work to be scanned through Arden University plagiarism detection system. It is Arden University policy to scan all assessments through the Turnitin plagiarism detection system. (Please refer to Section 8.5 for clarification on plagiarism and other forms of Assessment Offences).

Before your assignment submission deadline, you are advised to upload a draft assessment to ilearn. You will then be able to view the Originality Report generated by Turnitin, which will show any matches in your work to external sources that have

not been correctly referenced. Please allow 24 hours for the Turnitin report to be generated by the system and become available to you, particularly when you re-upload for a second time or more. To view your Turnitin originality report, click on the percentage 'similarity index score' which will appear next to your assessment once the report has been generated by the system.

When used appropriately, Turnitin can help ensure you both reference your work correctly and paraphrase external sources appropriately. In order to make best use of Turnitin you should be uploading your draft work to Turnitin and examining the Turnitin originality report at an early stage. You can upload your work as many times as you like via the submission portal, up until the assessment deadline, so it is recommended you make use of this facility. You are discouraged from uploading your work for the first and only time on the submission deadline because you will not have had the opportunity to address any issues which may result in your work being sent for investigation for an alleged Assessment Offence.

Further guidance on using Turnitin to review your draft assignment can be found on iLearn in the "Interpreting Turnitin Reports" guide in the Study Skills section of the induction module.

Once the assignment deadline has elapsed your submission will be final and your Tutor will use the originality report to assist with marking your work. Please note that on the deadline Turnitin will automatically re-scan your work and produce the final originality report. It is this final originality report that will be visible to the marker.

6.11 Notification of Assignment Grades

Arden University normally returns marked feedback forms directly to candidates within six weeks from the official submission date.

For assessments, provisional grades will normally be released within six weeks from the official submission date. Confirmed grades will normally be published within 12 weeks of the official deadline.

For dissertations, provisional grades will normally be released within 6-8 weeks after the date of submission. Confirmed grades will normally be published by the University of Wales within 16 weeks of the official deadline.

Final certificates will be issued once grades have been confirmed and may take up to a further 8 weeks (24 weeks after the submission deadline).

You will receive your provisional grade and assessment feedback from Arden University via email.

All grades must be confirmed by the Examining Board before confirmed grades can be released to students. Grades are therefore provisional and subject to change until they have been confirmed by the Examining Board. Where marks have not been confirmed by the Examining Board, the feedback will indicate this.

Examining Boards will consider and confirm students' progress and final award classifications. Examining Boards are a key part of the quality assurance processes to ensure that standards are comparable with those of other schemes within the University of Wales and the UK higher education system.

The Examining Board is attended by External Examiners who will review the work of students, the marks awarded and the assessment process as a whole before confirming grades.

Examining Boards normally take place in March, June, September and December of each year. Students will normally receive notification of confirmed grades within 5 working days of the Examining Board.

6.12 Re-assessment

Undergraduate Students

If you are referred in a module (i.e. you do not achieve a pass grade) you will have a further opportunity to take a new assessment in the module at the next available submission period. Postgraduate (PG) students are permitted **one** further attempt and Undergraduate (UG) students are permitted **three** further attempts.

If you fail a module at your second (PG) or fourth (UG) attempt, you will have no further assessment opportunities in that module. If you find yourself in this situation you should discuss your options with the Wales Support team.

The maximum grade that can be awarded for a re-assessment is the minimum pass of 40%. Please note that a £50 re-assessment charge will normally apply to standard modules.

As assessments change at every assessment period, please note that it is your responsibility to ensure you submit the correct paper. If in doubt, please contact the Wales Support Team.

Dissertations may only be resubmitted once the grade has been confirmed by the External Examiner.

6.13 Calculation of Degree Classification or Final Award

BA/BSc/LLB

The class of degree will be determined in accordance with the Full Honours classification scheme, according to the established percentage band equivalents:

<35%	=	fail
35-39	=	marginal fail
40 - 49.9%	=	third class
50 - 59.9%	=	lower second class
60 - 69.9%	=	upper second class
=>70%	=	first class

Students may be considered for a higher award than indicated by their award mark where either:

- i. They are marginal (usually within 2% of the higher classification boundary), or
- ii. Where more than half their level 3 credits are at the higher class.

If either of these criteria apply, a higher class of degree may be awarded if sufficient supplementary evidence of a higher class of performance is available to the Board. Such evidence might include:

- where a higher standard of work is demonstrated by supplementary evidence in addition to the module assessment components, including (for example) a *viva voce*;
- such other evidence as is deemed by the Programme Examining Board to be appropriate;
- the simultaneous application of both the criteria (i) and (ii).

Exceptionally the Examining Board may confer a higher class of degree where these criteria do not apply. In such a case it must be with the approval of the External Examiners and the reasons fully recorded in the minutes.

Students who have failed to reach the standard for the final award may be awarded an interim award where this is specified in the Programme Document.

Certificate/Diploma

The final award for this programme may be classified as follows:

Average Grade	Classification
70% +	Distinction
60% – 69%*	Merit
40% - 59%**	Pass
0% - 40%	Fail

*A merit *may* be awarded if the overall average grade is over 55% and more than half of the module marks are 60% or over.

**A distinction *may* be awarded if the overall average grade is over 65% and more than half of the module marks are 70% or over.

MBA/MSc

Successful completion of 180 credits entitles you to the full Master of Business Administration award. However, should you exit the course with 120 or 60 credits, you will be respectively entitled to the award PGDip or PGCert.

Candidates must pass Part One of the scheme of study successfully before being permitted to proceed to Part Two. The dissertation shall embody the methods and results of a research project. Its length shall not exceed 20,000 words.

Both Part One and Part Two must be completed successfully before a candidate may qualify for the award of a degree. The examiners may require candidates to undergo an oral examination at any stage of the scheme of study.

The modular pass-mark is 40%. In respect of Parts One and Two, Examining Boards may award overall marks according to the following scales established by the University:

Part One (the taught element)

70% and over	:	Distinction level
60-69%	-	Merit level
40-59%	:	Candidate eligible to proceed to Part Two
0-39%	:	Fail

Part Two (the Master's dissertation)

70% and over	:	Distinction level*
60-69%	-	Merit level**
40-59%	:	Pass
39%	:	Fail

*In order to gain a Master's Degree with Distinction, candidates shall achieve an overall mark of not less than 70%, having achieved not less than 65% in Part One and not less than 70% in Part Two. A candidate who has re-presented his/her dissertation for examination shall be eligible for the bare pass mark only (40%) and shall subsequently not be eligible for the award of distinction.

Notwithstanding the above, a candidate who has failed either Part of a scheme through unfair practice shall not, if permitted to attempt to retrieve such failure, be eligible for the award of a Distinction overall if successful.

**In order to gain a Master's Degree with Merit, candidates shall achieve an overall mark of not less than 60%, having achieved not less than 55% in Part One and not less than 60% in Part Two. A candidate who has re-presented his/her dissertation for examination shall be eligible for the bare pass mark only (40%) and shall subsequently not be eligible for the award of merit.

7 Policies

7.1 Academic Appeals

The University has established specific appeals procedures for candidates wishing to appeal against an academic decision. Any student enrolled on a programme leading to an award of the University of Wales is able to use the University's Appeals Procedures.

The University's Appeals Procedures can be found on the University of Wales' website:

<http://www.wales.ac.uk/en/Registry/Current-Students/StudentAppeals.aspx>

7.2 Mitigating Circumstances Guidelines

Mitigating circumstances (or "Mitigation") are circumstances which have occurred during the assessment process and which have, in some way, detrimentally impacted on your performance or even prevented you from completing one or more assessment tasks (Mitigation is sometimes alternatively referred to as "extenuating circumstances" or "extenuation").

Introduction

If you believe that there have been serious sudden and unforeseen circumstances which were beyond your control (e.g.: illness) which have:

- *prevented you from undertaking an assessment task (e.g.: you were unable to attend an examination, give a presentation or submit a coursework assignment) OR*
- *impaired your performance when undertaking an assessment task (e.g.: you became ill during an examination)*

Then you can submit a claim for mitigation. The circumstances should be current and have been unanticipated and beyond your control rather than disadvantageous conditions experienced throughout your studies (students with serious, long-term/permanent difficulties should contact Student Support Services).

*Please note that the mitigation process is designed to assist students with serious circumstances which have prevented them, for example, from either attending an examination/submitting a piece of coursework or which have impaired their performance during an examination/presentation. It is **NOT** designed to be used by students who, for example, have failed to ensure that they know the time and date of their examination, failed to prepare properly (e.g.: revise!) for an examination or simply not completed a piece of coursework due to poor time management.*

Grounds for Mitigation

A claim for mitigating circumstances will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances. A successful claim for mitigating circumstances will normally be based on evidence of circumstances that satisfies the criteria below. Namely that the circumstances are: *non-academic; unexpected; significantly disruptive; arising from matters beyond a student's control; likely to have affected the student's academic performance to an extent that is material.*

In order to be admissible, evidence submitted in support of a claim for mitigating circumstances should satisfy as many as possible of the following criteria: the evidence should be objective (for example medical certificate, death certificate or evidence from a counsellor), verifiable, and relevant. Self-certification will not normally be admissible. The burden of proof is on the student to establish the claim and to submit supporting evidence.

Claims for mitigating circumstances will normally be limited to:

(a) serious personal illness which is not a permanent medical condition in the run-up to an assessment deadline, or during an examination;

(b) acute personal or emotional trauma, e.g. acute anxiety or depression, family breakdown, breakdown of close personal relationship;

(c) the death or serious illness of a family member, or other person with whom the student had a close relationship, before the date of the assessment;

(d) significant and unplanned changes to employment circumstances or patterns of employment (EXCEPT Full Time study students);

(e) traumatic event (e.g. being assaulted, or witnessing an accident or assault);

(f) Domestic upheaval (for example fire, burglary or eviction);

(g) impact of natural disaster, civil disruption or other major hazard.

A student may not claim extenuating circumstances on the grounds that:

(a) lack of preparation at an assessment event;

(a) s/he considers the marks given to be too low;

(b) s/he did not understand or was unaware of the programme regulations;

(c) s/he misread or missed the published assessment timetable;

(d) normal assessment stress or anxiety experienced running up to the assessment (unless corroborated by medical evidence as a chronic condition and undergoing treatment);

(e) non-serious domestic or personal disruptions (for example moving house, change of job, holidays, weddings, normal job pressure, failed travel arrangements);

(f) study related circumstances (equipment failure or lack of suitable equipment) including failure to have taken back up copies, bunching of deadlines, poor time management).

(g) uploaded wrong assessment

The examples detailed in both lists are not exhaustive, and are intended only as a guide. In all cases, the convening Board has the ultimate authority to use its discretion, taking into account the full circumstances of a particular case.

Requests for consideration of mitigating circumstances should normally be submitted within 14 days of the date of the assessment affected. All claims must be submitted using the official Mitigation form available from your Student Support Co-ordinator along with any supporting evidence.

7.3 Complaints Procedure

Early Resolution

Wherever possible, the University and Arden University would wish to see any complaint resolved as close as possible to its point of origin, and with a minimum of formality.

The complaint should be discussed with the person involved and if the matter is not resolved the student may submit a formal complaint to the University of Wales.

Details of the formal complaints procedure can be found on the University of Wales' website:

<http://www.wales.ac.uk/en/Registry/Current-Students/StudentComplaints.aspx>

7.4 Equal Opportunities Policy

Introduction

Arden University is committed to providing equal opportunities for staff, external contractors and students and will not tolerate any discriminatory behaviour with respect to any of the following:

- Colour.
- Ethnic origin.
- Gender.
- Creed.
- Marital status.
- Sexual orientation.
- Disability.
- Other.

Aims

Arden University will continually develop strategies and procedures to tackle the varying forms of discrimination, which may occur. These will broadly fit into the following categories:

- Direct discrimination – where a person is not treated equally due to any of the categories listed above.
- Indirect discrimination – where a requirement, situation or condition, which is applied for all groups, has an adverse effect on one or more groups.
- Harassment – where someone is subjected to unwanted conduct, i.e. unwelcome sexual attention or racial harassment.
- Victimisation – where someone is treated less favourable due to action taken against others.
- Segregation – where someone is segregated due to his or her beliefs, attitudes or opinions.

Roles and responsibilities

It is the duty of all individuals and groups associated with Arden University to avoid discriminatory practices. They should also discourage discriminatory practices from others.

Arden University will encourage those who wish to report instances of discrimination and provide a confidential process by which all discriminatory matters can be dealt with by means of the formal Grievance Procedures.

A designated Arden University senior manager is responsible for equal opportunity monitoring and is the point of contact for those who may wish to discuss any discriminatory practice informally in the first instance.

Arden University will take action against anyone who is in breach of the Equal Opportunities Policy.

Students

Arden University will offer equality for access to all its courses and will encourage the recruitment of students from the widest possible audience both nationally and internationally. Arden University will also offer flexibility of access to the curriculum by enabling students to enrol for both units of Courses and full awards. This will be reinforced by:

- Marketing literature; this is produced for all courses.
- An admissions process, which is sensitive and supportive to the needs of all students, includes an enrolment process and provides for assessment of learning support for those students who may have special needs.
- The course review process will monitor the curriculum, student progress and achievement to ensure that equality of opportunity has taken place.
- All materials used for distance learning study and assessment will be subject to evaluation prior to issue to make sure that they do not contain anything which could be considered discriminatory or offensive to individual students or groups.

Statistical Analysis

Equal opportunities statistical information will be provided to monitor Arden University provision and will focus primarily on:

- Comparing equal opportunities statistics of those who register for Arden University courses.
- Data for analysis will be taken from the enrolment form.

Documentation relevant to Equal Opportunities

- Admissions Procedures.
- Induction Procedures.
- Assessment Policy.
- Grievance Procedure.
- Complaints Procedure.
- Assessment Policy.
- Staff Development Policy.
- Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) Procedures.
- Unit Evaluation Forms.
- Academic Appeals Policy.

7.5 *Unfair Practice*

The University of Wales is responsible for considering any allegation against a student that an assessment offence has occurred. The procedures for managing alleged unfair practice offences are detailed in the University of Wales Unfair Practice Procedure (available at: <http://www.wales.ac.uk>)

Penalties applied for academic impropriety, particularly repeat offences, are strictly applied by the University and can result in expulsion. We strongly recommend that you study the relevant section of the Regulations. When completing an assignment if you have any concerns about referencing or presentation, please contact your tutor before submitting the final draft of your work.

7.6 *Student Engagement Policy*

Introduction

Arden University is committed to ensuring that the student voice is fully represented in decision making. This occurs through both feedback and representative activities.

Feedback is achieved through completion of module and Course surveys. The latter is an annual event but modules are reviewed after each delivery iteration. Information from these surveys is taken to Course Committee; Joint Board of Studies; and Arden University Academic Board. Students are also provided with contact details of named staff from Arden University's Student Support Team who can deal with specific problems as and when they arise.

Representation provides opportunities for students to feed into the wider activities of Arden University. It has to be recognised that the distributed nature of the student body is less conducive to conventional meetings and that therefore focused use is made of on-line communications to achieve the desired outcomes.

Arden University will comply with the University of Wales requirements to have in place a staff student liaison committee and appointed student representatives in order to ensure that students have the opportunity for formal input into the management of the Courses. Students will receive details of the student

representative process as part of their induction and in their Student Handbooks. The principles outlined by the University and set out below will be adhered to.

Purpose of Student Representatives

Student representatives will be required to:

1. provide a student voice at all levels of Course management;
2. voice problems suggestions or requests raised by members of the student body;
3. act as a representatives on relevant course committees;
4. feed back to the student body on issues discussed during relevant meetings
5. provide student involvement in the planning and development of Courses.

Principles for the Appointment and Role of Student Representatives

Arden University has:

1. Published guidelines for the selection and appointment of student representatives (including provision for appointments to be made by the student body);
2. Published terms of office for student representatives including:
 - a. Details of the duration of office and any payment and/or reimbursement of expenses;
 - b. Duties of the role (a role description) including reference to required attendance at relevant meetings;
 - c. Information on the benefits of being a student representative;
 - d. Details of what training and/or induction a student representative should expect to receive.

Course Management Committee

The Course Management Committee (also referred to as a Course Committee) provides an opportunity for staff and student representatives to meet together for discussion and consultation about validated schemes of study and other matters relating to the quality of students' academic experience will be held on a quarterly basis for each validated Course. This will be held on-line through a discussion forum. In some cases where appropriate multiple Courses will be considered at the same meeting.

Composition:

The Course Management Committee will include the student representative(s) and designated members of Arden University Academic /Administrative staff. All members will have the right to submit items for inclusion on the agenda and raise items for discussion. A Chairperson and Secretary will be appointed by the Committee and full minutes should be kept of each meeting including a note on items requiring action.

Items for Discussion/Agenda:

These will include, inter alia:

1. discussion of matters raised by students, and matters on which Arden University wishes to seek student views;
2. the outcomes of student evaluation of schemes (via module evaluation forms) and Arden University responses; and
3. consideration of proposals for new schemes and any changes to current schemes.

Academic Board

There will be one student representative on Academic Board. Individuals nominated for this post must be existing student representatives from across ARDEN UNIVERSITY's courses. Where there is more than one nomination he/she will be elected by the student body.

7.7 Guidelines for the Selection and Appointment of Student Representatives

Why is student representation important?

Students are a key stakeholder in everything that Arden University does. Through student representation Arden University ensures that the student voice is heard when making decisions about the learning experience of over 7,000 students. Representation gives students the opportunity to share their opinion not only on their programme developments, but also the wider activities Arden University

The role of the student representative

Student representatives are members of Arden University's Course Committee which meets every 3 months to consider programme-related issues. The student representative's role is to gather feedback from fellow students on what works well with the programme, areas for improvement and any concerns to be addressed. Arden University gives student representatives all the tools to collect this information effectively. Student representatives will then highlight and present key findings to Arden University Course Committee for consideration.

In addition to this, one student representative will also be made a member of Arden University Academic Board which again meets every 3 months to make decisions on a wide range of issues, such as new programmes and also reviews Arden University provision to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.

And one student representative will also be a member of Arden University Learning and Teaching Committee which meets quarterly to develop the Arden University Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy.

What are the benefits of becoming a student representative?

Becoming a student representative is an opportunity to gain valuable skills that look impressive on your CV, while networking and engaging with peers and academic tutors. That aside, becoming a student representative allows you to communicate the

important views of your student community to senior members of staff at Arden University; ensuring your voices are heard and changes are made in the right places.

Making the student representative role a convenient and positive experience for you

The good news is that student representatives normally attend the meetings via Skype. So location is not an issue and there is little inconvenience when participating. Being a student representative can also demonstrate your dedication to learning and ability to work with fellow students and bring their views to a new audience.

How student representatives are appointed

Representatives are elected to represent all students from a programme (or group of programmes). Any active student can nominate him/herself as a student representative for that programme when the election period has been announced.

The programme discussion board will inform students every year when nominations are open and will include clear instructions on how nominations can be made and how the online voting system works.

How you can become part of this

To be considered for the role, you will need to respond to the call for nominations with a short statement about yourself, why you believe you will make a good student representative and why students should vote for you.

Voting will then be opened to the student body for a limited period of time using online survey mechanisms.

The student representative sitting on the Academic Board and the Learning and Teaching Committee will be elected by the student body from existing programme representatives following a similar nomination and election process.

How you can contact your current student representative today

We encourage students to discuss with their student representative any ideas for improvement or feedback about their programme. You can do this by posting on the *Student Feedback Forum* which can be found on the Induction page, or by sending a direct message to your student representative through ilearn.

We will let all students know when the next period of nominations will be open.

We hope you can join the debate

ANNEXES

Annex 1 – Learning Contract

This learning agreement is a 'partnership' between you, the student, and Arden University. To help you understand the roles and responsibilities of each party during the learning process, please take the time to read this Learning Contract and to confirm your commitment to the contract to Arden University.

Course of Study:

By embarking on this Course of Study you agree to:

- Abide by Arden University rules and regulations.
- Be responsible for your own learning.
- Attend and participate in scheduled activities when required.
- Utilise the Tutoring system when required to do so via the VLE.
- Utilise the student support mechanisms whenever you need guidance or advice.
- Retain copies of the assignment feedback sheets.
- Submit your own work and not plagiarise the work of others.

We Arden University, agree to:

- Give you advice and guidance regarding all aspects of your Course of Study.
- Provide you with the necessary learning and resource materials to enable you to undertake the learning process.
- Give you regular feedback via the Tutorial system regarding your progress on the course, including assessments.
- Respond to queries normally within two working days.
- Return assessment feedback to students, graded, normally within five weeks of the official submission date.
- Provide you with Tutorial/learning support via the VLE.
- Provide you with appropriate pastoral support if you need it.